

Chapter Two – Public Outreach Efforts



UNIVERSITY AVENUE MOBILITY PLAN

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Community outreach and participation was a cornerstone to the University Avenue Mobility Plan (UAMP) approach. This chapter describes the outreach strategies used in developing the Refined Concept Plan and presents the findings from these outreach efforts.

2.1 GOAL OF PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORTS

The public outreach goal was to prepare a traffic calming plan for University Avenue that is embraced by the local community, including property owners, business owners, residents, and other interested stakeholders. The project used interactive workshops, innovative technology, and a high level of communication to involve community members and develop a sense of local ownership.

2.2 PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

To involve and inform the local community, a number of different community participation opportunities were offered. The primary participation opportunities described below included community workshops, a steering committee, and an interactive project website.

- ❖ Six **community workshops** were held occurring at various points throughout the six-month planning process. Three interactive workshops aimed at a broad community audience were held on Saturday in the North Park neighborhood. Additionally, one workshop was held with the Greater North Park Planning Committee (GNPPC) and one with the Project Area Committee for the North Park Redevelopment Project (PAC). One joint workshop with both the GNPPC & PAC was held. Workshops included presentations, illustrative graphics, visual simulations of operating conditions, group exercises and activities, comment forms, and opportunities for questions and comments. Approximately 275 individuals were involved in these workshops.
- ❖ A 13-member **UAMP Steering Committee** comprised of key community stakeholders, including business owners, property owners, and residents provided guidance and direction through the planning process. The Steering Committee, most of who were also involved in the development of the original traffic calming concept from Phase I of the project, met monthly throughout the project.
- ❖ A project **website** was designed and maintained for the UAMP that allowed for 24-hour access to project information. The website included project history, draft reports, graphics, workshop dates, comment forms, as well as an email address allowing visitors to submit feedback and questions.



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Promotional materials, including direct mailings, press releases, posting of colorful flyers, and distribution of UAMP bookmarks with workshop dates and the project website were used to encourage participation.

2.3 SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The format for each of the six workshops and the public comments recorded at each workshop are provided in the following section.

Community Workshop #1: January 31, 2004

The January 31st workshop served as an introduction to the University Avenue Mobility Plan, including an overview of the Preferred Concept Plan and the scope of the current study. Approximately 50 members of the public were present. After the brief introductory presentation, participants were divided into small groups to identify and present their primary likes and dislikes, as well as concerns, of the Preferred Concept Plan.



Overall, the comments and discussion on the concept plan were positive. In particular, participants overwhelmingly liked the idea of the roundabout and diagonal parking where possible. They also indicated a preference for limiting turns, the raised median, and bulb-outs for safer pedestrian crossings. There were, however, numerous questions and comments that surfaced.





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Primary concerns and questions centered on how the transit-only lane would function, the increased distance between the bus stops (especially on the hill), a desire for streetcars, and the impacts of the Preferred Concept Plan on side street traffic (especially Florida Street and Lincoln Avenue). A variety of different new ideas and suggestions also emerged during the small group exercises, such as exploring another roundabout at Utah Street/University Avenue, and creating a major transit center at 29th Street by closing the street to vehicular access. Specific comments recorded during the workshop are identified below.

Roundabout

- ❖ Like modern roundabout/turn around (3)
- ❖ Roundabout is great
- ❖ Love the roundabout—we support this proposal
- ❖ Pershing/Redwood roundabout works well
- ❖ How do pedestrians use the roundabout?
 - ♦ Crossings are back from the roundabout
 - ♦ No traffic light as part of traffic circle slow traffic on University and Texas
- ❖ Texas Roundabout – do this first
 - ♦ Will it negatively impact bus or help?
 - ♦ Some like “perfect” (????)
 - ♦ Need good examples to promote
- ❖ Consider another modern roundabout at University and Utah

Medians & Turning

- ❖ Like Medians
 - ♦ Limits lefts
 - ♦ Landscaping
 - ♦ Calming
 - ♦ Block alleys – good
 - ♦ Medians are important to single lane concept
- ❖ Like elimination of left turn lanes (like El Cajon Blvd)
- ❖ Medians – enough space?
- ❖ Like restricted left turns
- ❖ Park and University install No Right Turn on Red WB
- ❖ Hamilton to Oregon - need left turn in middle of hill too
- ❖ Georgia to Florida - how to get drivers to merge early before right turn, if turn lanes

Stoplights, Signs, & Speeds

- ❖ Like traffic light at Hamilton / Arnold
- ❖ Desire timed lights for smoother traffic flow



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- ❖ Like standardization - signs and speed limit
- ❖ Need better standardization of signs and speed limits
- ❖ (Concerned about) Pershing Avenue blocked off (Left Turn Access)
- ❖ Hamilton / Arnold – Signal needed – none at present

Adjacent/Side Streets

- ❖ Texas to Pershing - determine how side streets affected; Florida closure?
- ❖ Need to have better access / circulation at Park
- ❖ Make sure to analyze rerouting of traffic
- ❖ Local travel vs. cross-town travel vs. tourist use
- ❖ 30th Street
 - ♦ Remove the flashing lights—very confusing
 - ♦ 30th / University bus stops Westside took all the parking spots
- ❖ 30th St. needs to be considered, especially between El Cajon Blvd. And Upas St.

Parking

- ❖ Like angled parking on Louisiana (2)
- ❖ Provide diagonal parking where left turns (3)
- ❖ Unanimous support for diagonal parking in residential areas.
- ❖ Parking - great – need to contact those affected by displaced parking
- ❖ What about parking meters?
- ❖ Left turn where diagonal parking
- ❖ Consider back-in diagonal parking

Transit

- ❖ Like dedicated transit lanes
- ❖ Removing travel lane except for right turners (transit-only lane):
 - ♦ Okay
 - ♦ But solve problem of drivers dashing into left lane from behind
 - ♦ How monitor bus / enforce
 - ♦ Make obvious
- ❖ How will bus way work for right turns and bikes?
- ❖ Transit only lane should be rubber tire easier to implement and can be modified to accommodate changes demographics
- ❖ Consider limited automobiles in transit only lanes
- ❖ Queue Jumpers (2) - also a benefit for automobiles/ buses not to “bunch”
- ❖ Buses stopping after traffic signals is a plus
- ❖ Include major bus stop for theater
- ❖ Losing bus stops? - concern for people w/access issues; analyze who uses (SANDAG)



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- ❖ Bus stops too far apart?
- ❖ Need bus shelters to block wind
- ❖ Bus exhaust bad for pedestrians
- ❖ Will consolidated bus stops (19 to 10) lead to congestion at the stops, since each stop would help more people?
- ❖ Close 29th Street at University – develop a major transit stop there
- ❖ Can buses, rapid bus transit and trolleys / streetcars complement one another?
- ❖ Busses / Rapid Transit / Trolleys
 - ♦ Concern with reduction in stops / faster travel time with fewer stops
 - ♦ Local transit use vs. cross-town travel
 - ♦ Tourist vs. local use
 - ♦ Trolley – visual indicator
- ❖ Bus, not rail
- ❖ Public is supportive of historic streetcar
- ❖ Historic streetcar on rails: University Avenue to Park Blvd. (12th and C)
- ❖ Streetcar stations on Park Blvd. (University to C) correspond to Bus Rapid Transit Stations (fewer stops than bus)
- ❖ Historic streetcar should be operated by SANDAG
- ❖ Historic streetcar should be part of a system of streetcar lines, perhaps including 30th
- ❖ Benefits of streetcar on rails are:
 - ♦ Enhanced transit that people will ride
 - ♦ Economic revitalization
 - ♦ Historic preservation
 - ♦ Tourism
- ❖ Transit oriented development – commitment
- ❖ Is design redundant to actual trolley?
- ❖ Transit First

Pedestrians/Bicycles

- ❖ Like bulb outs
- ❖ Like bikes / pedestrian separation on University, east of Park
- ❖ Want safe pedestrian crossings at traffic lights and pedestrian-activated signals
- ❖ Bicycle paths on parallel streets if necessary, but ideally on University Avenue
- ❖ Bicycles couldn't use the transit lanes if there are rails
- ❖ Offsets streets create lots of pedestrian crossing possibilities
- ❖ Park to Georgia
 - ♦ Separate bikes / pedestrians
 - ♦ Rail should be skateboard-proof
- ❖ University/Park - need to ID there is a pedestrian crossing
- ❖ School – Jefferson: Kids are safety patrol –carefully design



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- ❖ Explore the opportunity for a design competition at Georgia St. Bridge to improve walkability, accessibility, and aesthetics

Implementation

- ❖ Like maintaining existing right-of-way
- ❖ Maintenance concerns
- ❖ Implementation could be disruptive
- ❖ Care must be given so that no businesses are lost during implementation
- ❖ Need to ensure construction materials are high quality
- ❖ Who maintains improvements?
- ❖ Project will have to be done incrementally as funding is made available.
- ❖ Test with striping before full implementation (paint the medians and bulb-outs before actually building them)
- ❖ Implement small elements first. Implementation plan should identify parts that could be individually funded.
- ❖ Implement the roundabout first and the 30th Street Transit Station second
- ❖ Vote for Transnet extension in November!
- ❖ Funding could come partially from SANDAG. Also, there are federally funded programs that may be available in a couple of years. Transnet and Smart Growth incentive programs could also provide some funds.

Streetscape Design

- ❖ Themed bus stop benches - “Historic” at some locations
- ❖ Like landscaping / trees
- ❖ We support these (silhouette) types of bus shelters
- ❖ Landscaping of medians a must
- ❖ Street lighting not addressed in plan - streets too dark for pedestrians
- ❖ Street Lighting – Diffusers should be used
- ❖ Too dark
- ❖ Want a theme for all bus stops
- ❖ Concrete historic bus benches
- ❖ Pedestrian crossing at Kansas - consider enhancing with art special paving

Other Comments

- ❖ Take/provide field trips to other areas to see traffic calming concepts
- ❖ Concept is wonderful
- ❖ Plan is a lot to absorb
- ❖ Farmers market – what are location impacts?



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GNPPC Workshop: February 17, 2004

A presentation was made to the Greater North Park Planning Committee that included an introduction to the UAMP, as well as an overview of the original traffic calming concept plan. Similar to the first community workshop, participants were asked to provide their input on what they liked about the original idea, as well as to identify potential issues and concerns. Approximately 30 GNPPC members and 15 community members were in attendance. The following comments were recorded during this large group brainstorm. Responses by the Project Team to specific questions are shown in italics.

Transit Stops

- ❖ Why remove so many bus stops - doesn't seem to encourage transit? [*response – looking at this issue through the analysis*]
- ❖ Stops shouldn't be more than 2 blocks apart
- ❖ Removing stops reduces the amount of travel time on the bus/need to balance speed of getting to location with convenience
- ❖ Like the concept of having buses go through signal before stopping

Mobility Scooters

- ❖ 20-30 years from now, they will be predominant
- ❖ 15% of transit riders likely to be on scooters; this should be considered

Number of Crosswalks

- ❖ Slowing speeds during rush hour
- ❖ Tracking timers has helped
- ❖ Side Streets
- ❖ Losing 52 spots on University, requires parking on side streets
- ❖ Clearly making parking spots on street needed

Texas to KFC

- ❖ Travelway is tight = anxiety

Angled Parking

- ❖ Like angled parking
- ❖ Can be difficult to pull out (especially at near store)

Florida to Park

- ❖ Are there plans to make it more walkable? [*response – specifics were not included in concept, but is being considered*]
- ❖ Bridge is a concern (maintenance, structural, aesthetic) – CalTrans is supposed to be in process of working on it



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Pilot Village – Connections

- ❖ Will the Mobility Plan process connect to the Pilot Village process? *[response – yes; however, the Pilot Village process will continue after Mobility Plan is complete]*

Arizona to Villa Terrace

- ❖ Too narrow eastbound? Widen or acquire new property necessary? *[response – will be looked at through the study]*
- ❖ Convenience store – no on-street parking? *[response – as currently depicted in the concept, parking is removed]*

New Projects

- ❖ Will new projects (such as 30th & El Cajon and Lincoln & 30th) be taken into account? *[response – yes, they are assumed in the analysis]*

Ohio Street

- ❖ What are the allowable City threshold/capacities on this street? Other residential streets? *[response – varies based on street width, etc. Contact City for exact numbers]*

Stop Signs

- ❖ Does capacity increase with stop signs? *[response – generally no]*

Project Area

- ❖ How far south on side streets does the boundary extend? *[response – approximately one block]*

Community Workshop #2: March 20, 2004

Approximately 30 people attended the second Saturday workshop. The workshop was separated into three distinct segments:

- ❖ First, a presentation was made to the participants that included an analysis of potential impacts to traffic, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians based upon three scenarios: “existing conditions,” “year 2030 without the project,” and “year 2030 with the project.”
- ❖ This presentation was followed by a series of 15-minute *small group discussions* in which each person was encouraged to discuss their thoughts on each of the following aspects of the plan and analysis: traffic, transit, historic streetcar, bicycles, and pedestrians.



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- ❖ The final segment of the workshop was a *dot exercise* in which participants were given two green dots and one red dot and asked to identify those topics of most importance and the one of least importance.

Findings of the workshop are recorded below. Comments submitted by participants in writing after the workshop are identified in *italics*.



General Comments & Questions

- ❖ Concerns/discussion regarding number and location of bus stops
- ❖ Can the transit-only lane be used during rush hour traffic?
- ❖ Planned parking garage added should be considered in parking/traffic study
- ❖ Look at regional bike routes – overlay on concept plan

Small Group Discussions

Transit

- ❖ Make University a Transit Only Corridor
 - ♦ Divert traffic to other streets
 - ♦ Or One-way traffic along University
- ❖ Businesses would suffer if no traffic – only transit
- ❖ Trolley may revitalize the community
- ❖ Look at two-lane roundabout (X 3)
- ❖ Run model without roundabout (X 3)
- ❖ Extend transit lane to make it continuous between I-805 and Park (X 3)
- ❖ Continuous transit lane (west of 30th)
- ❖ Look at more angled parking on side street
- ❖ Supports realignment of transit stops
- ❖ Look at other options then roundabout at Texas
- ❖ Continuous transit lanes mitigated by angled parking & structures
- ❖ Too many stops today – favor less stops (X 4)



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- ❖ One lane roundabout doesn't work (x 3)
- ❖ Like transit only lanes because they minimize negative interactions
- ❖ Parallel parking problematic in "core"
- ❖ Compare two-lane roundabout with traffic light at Texas
- ❖ No transit stop at theatre (X 4)
- ❖ Have buses leap-frog stops to speed up service
- ❖ Minimize crossing for transferring passengers
- ❖ Scramble cross at 30th/University to make transit connections easier
- ❖ Don't lose many parking spots if you eliminate parking in the core (X 4)
- ❖ Consider eliminating the transit only lane (X 3)
- ❖ *Decreasing the number of bus stops is desirable. This will have a positive impact on transit.*
- ❖ *Parking garage is needed in the Florida to Texas area and a parking garage is needed in the Texas to 28th Street area.*
- ❖ *Eliminate the roundabout. It creates a mess with traffic and transit and requires a major taking of property.*

Historic Streetcar

- ❖ Double sided – double ended vehicles
- ❖ Place streetcar on Lincoln
- ❖ Place Buses on Lincoln
- ❖ No turn around at end – big loop
- ❖ Catenary poles are a visual problem
- ❖ Go straight at Roundabout
- ❖ *Inclusion of the historic streetcar is critical! The transit, economic, and tourism benefits of the streetcar will be phenomenal. This has been documented nationwide with other such historic streetcar lines in other cities.*
- ❖ *With historic streetcar in place, #7 should go down 30th Street to Upas to Pershing to downtown.*
- ❖ *Streetcar should have identical stations as buses on University and BRT on Park Blvd.*
- ❖ *System should allow for the greatest variety of streetcar vehicles including PCC's, which historically operated from 1937 – 1949.*
- ❖ *Single ended vehicles must be allowed.*
- ❖ *Loop option at 32nd Street is ideal.*

Pedestrians

- ❖ Grim
 - ♦ Overall concern regarding removal of crosswalks at Grim.
 - ♦ Pedestrian crossing remove – ok
 - ♦ Why was Grim allowed a median break? Why not 31st median break?



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- ♦ Keep Grim.
- ♦ Keep pedestrian crossing
- ♦ Future land use may drive a need to change configuration at Grim. In addition to maintaining the crosswalks, provide left turn access for the existing Post Office and future Library site
- ❖ Parking
 - ♦ OK to eliminate parking on University if replacement parking on nearby side streets can be provided.
- ❖ Seniors
 - ♦ Slower walking speeds crossing speeds leads to a need for longer pedestrian crossing times.
 - ♦ Mobility scooter will become more utilized as the population ages.
 - ♦ Bike lane – mobility lane – To allow for scooters and other motorized vehicles of the future.
- ❖ 30th Street
 - ♦ Implement pedestrian scramble phase. Allows pedestrians to move from corner to corner in any direction. Will help pedestrians get to their transit stop and minimize the number of crossings at each intersection.
 - ♦ Make sure pedestrian phase is long enough
- ❖ Co-locating
 - ♦ At major intersection reduce number crossings near transit stops. Only allow pedestrians to cross when a bus is at the stop. This will reduce the number of ped crossings per hour and improve traffic flow along University.
 - ♦ Coordinate pedestrian with transit
 - ♦ Rush hour vs. non-rush hour pedestrian timing. Allow more frequent pedestrian crossings during off-peak times.
- ❖ Trolley
 - ♦ Waiting time for pedestrian when trolley transitions
- ❖ *From 28th/Idaho streets to 32nd Street, sidewalks should be terracotta colored with diagonal scoring. This creates a sense of place in the main part of the business district and differentiates it from the surrounding area.*

Traffic

- ❖ Remove or modify the one lane roundabout
- ❖ Better coordination of signals
- ❖ The intersections at Texas and Utah need to be improved
- ❖ 2 lane roundabout option should be considered
- ❖ A continuous transit lane along the corridor would improve traffic flow
- ❖ Remove Grim left turn – 31st.



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- ❖ Require over-parking of new development to offset any parallel parking loss on University due to continuous transit lane
- ❖ Keep signal at Lincoln/Texas as an alternative to roundabout
- ❖ Designate Lincoln as a bike route to get them off of University (many bicyclists already use Lincoln as an alternative)
- ❖ Don't remove left turn across from University to Bancroft (westbound)
- ❖ Protected lefts at signals instead of permitted may help traffic flow
- ❖ Block off Ray Street at North Park (southbound)
- ❖ Floating lane that changes with peak hours would provide additional capacity in the peak direction
- ❖ Signal operation at Boundary – access to 805
- ❖ Remove parallel parking on University for transit lane
- ❖ Implement a parking permit program
- ❖ Better signage to Lincoln/North Park
- ❖ Install a signal at Lincoln/Texas. This would allow through movements on Lincoln, which are currently blocked by a median
- ❖ Remove stops on Lincoln through traffic progression
- ❖ More left turn restrictions in vicinity of 30th
- ❖ Reduce volumes on University by moving traffic to side streets
- ❖ Remove parking on University to allow a continuous transit lane
- ❖ *Two-lane roundabout is even worse than a one-lane roundabout. It requires a major taking of property at all four corners.*
- ❖ *Is a one-lane automobile configuration really going to work? Carrying capacity is important.*
- ❖ *Timing of the traffic lights needs to be ideal for automobile flow.*
- ❖ *20 mph is an ideal speed for cars. Any less would be too slow.*

Bicycles

- ❖ Need bike lanes on alternative streets
- ❖ Parallel streets are safer
- ❖ University Avenue – Park to Florida – narrow transition is tricky
- ❖ Transit only lane would work with better technology (bus exhaust would be less of an issue for cyclists riding in transit only lane behind buses)
- ❖ Safety issue – University Avenue is not as safe as the alternative parallel streets.
- ❖ Lincoln should be an alternative
- ❖ Mixing bicycles and transit is a problem due to the potential to breathe exhaust fumes, especially during peak hour periods.
- ❖ Trolley and bicycles are incompatible due to the potential for bicycle tires to get caught in the track grooves.



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- ❖ Lincoln may not be fast enough or wide enough for a bike lane but a Class 3 Bicycle Route could work (a bicycle route sign).
- ❖ Wightman, Lincoln and North Park Way are potential alternative routes.
- ❖ Bicycles should share lane with mobility scooters.
- ❖ Diagonal lanes conflict with bicycles.
- ❖ Use alternate routes for busiest stretches.
- ❖ University from Park to Mississippi is especially dangerous.
- ❖ Consider possible 2 levels on University – pedestrians up and bicycles underneath.
- ❖ Give bicycles transit priority too.
- ❖ Historic street cars vs. bicycles – a definite conflict.
- ❖ Cyclists need University to get into neighborhood coming from the west to Louisiana.
- ❖ With trolley, bikes should use Lincoln.
- ❖ Most cyclists now use Lincoln or Wightman or North Park Way.
- ❖ Don't change the existing pattern.
- ❖ Designate Lincoln as a Bike Route with Bike Lanes if possible.
- ❖ Tradeoffs
- ❖ Exhaust fumes on University vs. alternative routes
- ❖ Numerous stop signs on alternative routes or stop lights on University
- ❖ Bikes should use University only for short trips.
- ❖ *Bicycle inclusion is important but bicycle advocates should not derail the historic streetcar line.*
- ❖ *There should be bicycle lanes on Texas Street, on Lincoln Avenue and on Utah Street.*
- ❖ *Divert bicycle traffic to Lincoln Avenue, Wrightman Street, and North Park Way.*
- ❖ *Bicycle routes should be augmented with signage.*
- ❖ *There needs to be a good bicycle transition from Lincoln Avenue to University Avenue at Florida Street.*
- ❖ *Bicycles on University Avenue from Park Blvd. to Florida Street needs to be taken into consideration.*



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Dot Exercise

Workshop participants were given one red dot and two green dots. Participants were asked to place their dots on the elements of the concept plan identified below. Red dots indicate elements of the plan which are lowest priority or least favorable. Green dots indicate elements of the plan that are most favorable or highest priority. A summary of the dot exercise is provided below.

- ❖ Pedestrian Enhancements
 - ◆ 0 = Red dots
 - ◆ 10 = Green dots
- ❖ Transit Improvements
 - ◆ 2 = Red dots
 - ◆ 14 = Green dots
- ❖ Historic Streetcar
 - ◆ 7 = Red dots
 - ◆ 16 = Green dots
- ❖ Traffic Signals At Arnold And Oregon
 - ◆ 2 = Red dots
 - ◆ 3 = Green dots
- ❖ Raised Median
 - ◆ 1 = Red dots
 - ◆ 2 = Green dots
- ❖ Roundabout At Texas Street
 - ◆ 13 = Red dots
 - ◆ 5 = Green dots

PAC Workshop: April 13, 2004

RBF Consulting presented the updated findings of the UAMP traffic/transit analysis to the Project Area Committee (PAC). Six Committee members and approximately ten community members were in attendance. As a result of the information presented at this meeting, the following comments and questions were raised. Responses to questions are noted in italics after the comment and comments from forms submitted after the meeting are noted in italics at the end of the list.



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- ❖ Was closing Texas to the south considered?
- ❖ Bus intrusions into travel lanes needs to be addressed.
- ❖ How many parking spaces to be relocated? *[response: 68 parking spaces relocated]*
- ❖ Do we know number of handicapped bus passengers for 2030? will influence future delays
- ❖ Buses should be in transit lane all the time with all alternatives.
- ❖ What about past Boundary & Park? Are we burdening other areas?
- ❖ What about the Georgia Street Bridge?
- ❖ Slowing traffic – how does it affect businesses?
- ❖ Slowness vs. stop-n-go ... slow & smooth is the goal
- ❖ What about left turn pockets? *[response: yes]*
- ❖ Can cars use transit lanes while no buses?
- ❖ Can cars use transit lanes as acceleration lanes to enter traffic lanes?
- ❖ Pedestrian accident data? *[response: was collected in Phase I]*
- ❖ Realignment of Texas – cost? Recommend to compare costs with street closure
- ❖ Looking at parking on all side streets? *[response: yes]*
- ❖ Two big time-saving items seem to be - Ohio closure and relocation of parking
 - ♦ is grief of Texas realignment worth it?
 - ♦ should look at roundabout without transit
- ❖ Bus stops removal – based on previous community concerns, we should know time savings.
- ❖ Roundabout – how will it function for pedestrians? It will take time to get used to.
- ❖ Has the time it will take to make left turns been studied?
- ❖ *Do not remove the left turn (to South) on University just west of Boundary – the one before Sav-On on 32nd.*
- ❖ *Provide a rush hour speed/signalization and req. speed signalization.*
- ❖ *Show traffic flow around theater/garage w/800 spaces + through traffic.*
- ❖ *Protect residential parking with stickers from parking blight!*

Joint PAC/GNPPC Workshop: May 6, 2004

RBF Consulting presented the updated findings of the UAMP traffic/transit analysis to a joint meeting of the North Park Redevelopment Project Area Committee (PAC) and the Greater North Park Community Planning Committee (GNPCPC). Approximately 20 people were in attendance, including Committee representation and community members. As a result of the information presented at this meeting, the following list of comments and questions were raised. Responses to the questions are noted in italics.



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Comments on Streetcar

- ❖ Location/destination concerns...
- ❖ Will tourists come to N. Park?
- ❖ Theater is an asset.
- ❖ Potential problems at Florida (dependent on transit-priority signal)
- ❖ Maintenance/storage facility – why not at “Bonanza Corvettes” spot?
- ❖ Look at this area, not in existing neighborhoods (homes) where homes removed
- ❖ Market St. (San Francisco) – can’t the North Park car work similarly?
- ❖ Width? *[response: similar to bus]*
- ❖ Do people feel calmer around streetcars? *[response: fixed rail has been shown to make people feel more at ease]*
- ❖ Still opportunity for streetcar north of Park? C to Adams? *[response: not being pursued by SANDAG currently]*
- ❖ What about on El Cajon?
- ❖ Parking/loading/unloading primary concern on University
- ❖ Alley access
- ❖ Can streetcar operate in mixed
- ❖ Will there be less buses with streetcar?
- ❖ Fares – same as mass transit? Open air?

Comments on Refined Alternatives

- ❖ What about parking in front of businesses?
- ❖ How/were businesses informed?
- ❖ Large freights won’t unload on side streets.
- ❖ Side streets already jammed
- ❖ Parking needs on side streets already high
- ❖ New loading zones will result in loss of proposed parallel parking on side streets.
- ❖ Residents will take new parallel spaces proposed.
- ❖ Business accessibility impacted
- ❖ Some businesses don’t get foot traffic from buses.
- ❖ Bus drivers cause conflicts (transit-only lane should help).
- ❖ Use of alleys prohibited currently for loading/unloading
- ❖ Why accommodate buses?
- ❖ Couldn’t side streets accommodate buses? Lincoln, etc.
- ❖ Shouldn’t residents also have to deal with problems?
- ❖ Who we service vs. who we want to service is the question.
- ❖ What about Texas? How will it be changed? *[response: currently proposed to leave as is]*
- ❖ What about a backlash into Hillcrest?



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- ❖ Temp parking/loading in off peak?
- ❖ Medians – are residents aware?
- ❖ What about other/surrounding communities? Have they been informed?
- ❖ Where are people traveling from?
- ❖ People aren't going to walk.
- ❖ Bus transition point is for pedestrians on bus, not foot traffic of shoppers

Community Workshop #3: June 12, 2004

The final Saturday workshop on June 12, 2004 included approximately 113 participants. The workshop included a summary presentation followed by an open house to allow community members to ask questions and view exhibits. Seven “stations” were included as part of the open house that provided specific details and particulars about the Refined Concept Plan under discussion for the University Avenue corridor:

- ♦ Parking
- ♦ Intersections
- ♦ Pedestrians
- ♦ Streetscape & Roadway Design
- ♦ Transit Improvements
- ♦ VISSIM Simulation
- ♦ Traffic Diversion Patterns



As part of the open house, participants were asked to respond to a two-page questionnaire to provide their feedback on the Mobility Plan. Additionally, comment boards were located throughout the room. The following list summarizes the comments received at the workshop and those received after the workshop (as of June 21, 2004).



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Questionnaire

1. **Do you live in or near the University Avenue Corridor?**
Yes **35** No **11**
2. **Do you own property or a business in the University Avenue Corridor?**
Yes **27** No **19**
3. **How often during a typical week do you...ride the bus on University?**
Never **35** 1-2 days **2** 3-4 days **0** 5-6 days **1** Every day **0**
How often during a typical week do you...ride your bike on University?
Never **33** 1-2 days **9** 3-4 days **0** 5-6 days **1** Every day **0**
How often during a typical week do you...walk along University?
Never **7** 1-2 days **19** 3-4 days **11** 5-6 days **7** Every day **4**
How often during a typical week do you...drive along University?
Never **0** 1-2 days **2** 3-4 days **12** 5-6 days **10** Every day **18**
4. **I like the concept of a TRANSIT-ONLY LANE along the University Avenue Corridor.**
Strongly disagree **6** Disagree **3** No opinion **2** Agree **9** Strongly agree **26**

What additional comments do you have about the concept for TRANSIT as shown in the University Avenue Mobility Plan?

- ❖ Good for SANDAG, bad for North Park. Make bus lane into carpool lane
- ❖ Do not limit auto traffic in "only" lanes during rush hour
- ❖ Although I don't take bus on University Avenue, I do use the #2 to go downtown to Petco & to jury duty. I think better transit flow is important so you won't miss using your car.
- ❖ Yes to the Historic Trolley!
- ❖ With only one lane for regular traffic, I don't think the bus should ever enter that lane. Buses s/b in transit lane only.
- ❖ Prefer the concept of a transit-only lane with no parking. I don't know the feasibility of allowing restricted parking in that lane. I hate to see buses and cars sharing the same lane.
- ❖ I like the streetcar!
- ❖ The historic streetcar concept is great. This would bring a lot of new business to the corridor and reduce automobile traffic.
- ❖ Must follow both sides (N&S) of University
- ❖ Waivers for businesses that need deliveries.
- ❖ We would take the transit more often.
- ❖ I would like to see the proposed historic trolley route included in the plan.
- ❖ What happened to the trolley?
- ❖ The impact of removing two traffic lanes is severe to mobility vs the appearance of a bus every 5-10 minutes. What about a bus cut out?



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- ❖ If trolley is restored, it will need its own lane.
- ❖ Excellent concept.
- ❖ I avoid University Avenue whenever possible now because of getting stuck behind busses.
- ❖ Not sure streetcar would work.
- ❖ Is this a good thing for merchants? Reduced traffic flow?
- ❖ The transit only corridor is going to eliminate precious parking spaces on University Avenue and eliminate traffic lanes that in turn will increase congestion.

5. **I like the PEDESTRIAN improvements illustrated on the University Avenue Mobility Plan.**
Strongly disagree 1 Disagree 3 No opinion 3 Agree 11 Strongly agree 26

What additional comments do you have about the concept for PEDESTRIANS and BICYCLES as shown in the University Avenue Mobility Plan?

- ❖ Does not reflect “future” developments i.e. scooter & mobility cars (300% increase)
- ❖ Widen the crosswalk in front of the theatre so that it extends from 29th to Kansas and use special paving marked crosswalks on all side streets. Provide “scramble” pedestrian crossing at 30th and University Avenue.
- ❖ As a cyclist, I find the provisions for bicycles overkill. There are enough parallel routes. I find this consistent with the study showing 12-15 cyclists in an 8-hour window.
- ❖ Need a “scramble” pedestrian crossing at 30th and University. Wider crosswalks at Kansas to 29th.
- ❖ We need a better bicycle plan for side streets. Can we improve bicycle access on Lincoln Ave?
- ❖ Wonderful – This will help the North Park area finally accommodate all forms of transportation.
- ❖ This will make North Park corridor more pedestrian oriented.
- ❖ I recommend that lighted crosswalks be replaced with actual traffic signals (red lights) because presently, cars completely ignore flashing lights at crosswalks & it’s very scary for pedestrians.
- ❖ Could diagonal crossing points be placed in high pedestrian intersection for convenience to pedestrian.
- ❖ At present, I’ve witnessed under utilized sidewalks except in the vicinity of 30th & Univ. Could buses & bikes share some common space?
- ❖ Need to study more
- ❖ A through bicycle route & facility should be identified



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6. Please indicate your level of comfort with the PARKING concept by circling a number on a scale of 1 to 5.

Very uncomfortable **3** Uncomfortable **6** No opinion **2** Comfortable **24** Very Comfortable **11**

What additional comments do you have about the concept for PARKING as shown in the University Avenue Mobility Plan?

- ❖ Eliminate restricted parking – too confusing for motorists
- ❖ I am concerned about off-peak parking in the bus lane east of 30th St.
- ❖ I will lose the only parking in front of my property and is going to impact my property by the placement of a bus stop in front of my 2101 & 2103 University Avenue property.
- ❖ You will be removing more parking spaces than those that we will gain
- ❖ Side street expanded parking is essential – Alabama Street condo occupants have no place to park. Can you accomplish this first???
- ❖ 1. Additional parking very costly. 2. Loading/unloading?
- ❖ How will parking structure work? Can local businesses validate tickets at reduced rates?
- ❖ Parking will always be a problem in our business area
- ❖ I wonder if the parking allowed in the transit lane could be completely eliminated in favor of passenger drop-off + loading only. I find it difficult to drop off my elderly mother convenient to business.
- ❖ People will come and patronize businesses because it is a vibrant, safe place. Walking from a block away will not be a problem
- ❖ Eliminate restricted parking on north side of University – small benefit – confusing result – suggest eliminate these spaces entirely
- ❖ Nice start, but with more housing & retail on the horizon, significant increases are needed.
- ❖ How large would the proposed parking garage be behind the North Park Theater?
- ❖ Are any of the new parking spaces going to be marked for handicapped? Will you provide diagonal parking University to El Cajon?
- ❖ Eliminate “restricted hours” parking and simply remove any potential for parallel parking to avoid confusion + midday congestion. Short-term pain, but businesses will adjust + should adjust for long-term gain.
- ❖ About time!
- ❖ More diagonal side street parking, less parking on University
- ❖ Any individual business opposed to “losing” their parking is shortsighted + selfish. An area must provide a comfortable driving environment to attract more businesses + patrons. (unlike sports arena and Mission Valley)
- ❖ Plan will redirect through traffic into neighborhood parallel to Univ. becoming blighting influence! Rush hour traffic will be awful.
- ❖ 1. Diagonal parking will blight U.A. like it has done to City Heights. 2. Parking sticker (free) for residents. 3. Removal of “choke pt.” Parking areas, within 1500’ of Univ/30th



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- ❖ Parking in the transit lane – I don't think it's a good idea. Then the buses have to go in the lane with cars?
- ❖ There should be no parking in the transit lane.
- ❖ Every possible effort should be made to fund on-street parking along University to improve the pedestrian experience as well as increase business.
- ❖ I feel parking off University is better for traffic flow & for the individuals parking. It would be safer & easier to park on side streets. Also having parking lots become parking structures & reduce # of lots only.
- ❖ "Peak" parking on University is not good. People will get angry if ticketed or towed. Also, peak/no peak parking conflicts with the historic streetcar

7. What do you like BEST about the University Avenue Mobility Plan?

- ❖ Slow traffic & beautify the corridor – more pedestrian friendly walking
- ❖ The median/left-turn facilities & pedestrian waiting area (refuge)
- ❖ Nothing yet! You need to involve residents and businesses in determining the future of a main street that will impact their daily lives the most.
- ❖ Pedestrian concept
- ❖ Style + function
- ❖ Beauty
- ❖ Better for pedestrian access and will keep cars moving by eliminate competition for bus traffic & left turns
- ❖ Pedestrian safety & enjoyment of (hopefully new + improved) storefront businesses.
- ❖ Better flow, limiting turns, median
- ❖ The old historic street cars
- ❖ Transit only lane pedestrian emphasis
- ❖ 1. Beautification. 2. Left hand turns
- ❖ Business friendly
- ❖ Transit only lanes
- ❖ The greenbelt
- ❖ The fact that the problem is being addressed! Don't let North Park have problems like Hillcrest!!!
- ❖ Center median
- ❖ Pedestrian improvements
- ❖ Pedestrian improvements
- ❖ Want it beautiful but practical. Solutions for businesses
- ❖ It can't be worse than it is right now
- ❖ The upgrade in appearance and traffic flow for through traffic can go for El Cajon
- ❖ Traffic moving along
- ❖ Trolley
- ❖ Fresh ideas – this works in other cities!



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- ❖ The buses out of my lane – I'm afraid of them!
- ❖ Forward thinking! Easing the hassle of getting through the corridor + allowing beautification to increase overall allure
- ❖ Median, bulb-out improvements
- ❖ Interest of community vs. big business seems at hand
- ❖ 2 lanes & transit lanes
- ❖ Balanced approach for pedestrian, transit & auto needs
- ❖ Brings the avenue back to the immediate community
- ❖ Making it a desirable place to shop. Eliminating the issues of cars & buses competing. Eliminating the disruption caused by cars turning left
- ❖ Turning made easier for cars
- ❖ Bringing more pedestrian traffic to University Avenue & bus lanes & car lanes
- ❖ Slow traffic & beautify the corridor. More pedestrian friendly walking
- ❖ Transit promotion – increased transit use

8. What **CHANGES** would you most like to see on the University Avenue Mobility Plan?

- ❖ Transit lanes on both sides – Park to Boundary
- ❖ Initially, install a bus lane eastbound west of Utah – convert it to auto use only when demand requires. Some kind of landscape treatment needed at Texas St.
- ❖ Have a more coherent plan that preserves existing parking and possibly increasing parking, and planning bus stops at commercial locations instead of residential location.
- ❖ Create more parking
- ❖ Parking issues
- ❖ Diagonal crosswalks on heavy corners like 30th.
- ❖ Leave off median. Create a (unreadable) with one lane
- ❖ No parking in transit lane
- ❖ Faster implementation
- ❖ Masterful concept
- ❖ Protestors outside have a point. Plan must include way for businesses to get their freight
- ❖ The absence of left hand turns & single traffic lanes
- ❖ The trolley running up Park Blvd from Downtown and through North Park
- ❖ Designation for seniors/handicapped
- ❖ Trolley included
- ❖ Scrap it
- ❖ Bulb-outs, pedestrian crossings, medians, left-turn pockets
- ❖ Acceleration of completion
- ❖ None
- ❖ Safer crosswalks
- ❖ Bike/transit lane. Open up possibility of streetcar



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- ❖ No meters ever. If there is landscaping in median, use low water plants – plants natural to climate/environment
 - ❖ Another change that would improve the plan is to have more left turns from University to side streets, even if the intersection is not signalized
 - ❖ See previous questions
 - ❖ Removing parking bring back the trolley
 - ❖ Movable divider for rush hour use diff. Speed limits for rush hour
 - ❖ 1. Leave 1. turn at Bancroft going N. 2. Install no right turn on red on North Park Way going west at 30th St. 3. Extend left-turn queue lane to east--- major issue
 - ❖ Storefront improvements, more shade trees
 - ❖ The current plan seems to be well thought out. I like the ideas of designated bus lanes & private vehicle lanes & better crosswalks to enhance pedestrian traffic
9. **Please indicate your level of comfort with the University Avenue Mobility Plan by circling the appropriate number on a scale of 1 to 5.**
 Very uncomfortable **2** Uncomfortable **5** No opinion **2** Comfortable **19** Very Comfortable **16**
10. **Have you attended any of the previous meetings and workshops regarding the University Avenue Mobility Plan?** Yes **23** No **24**
11. **How did you hear about this workshop?**
- ❖ Flyer (7 responses)
 - ❖ Mail & paper
 - ❖ We received a personal notice – thank you - Brinton Family Trust
 - ❖ North Park Main Street
 - ❖ By mail. This is the first time I hear about this plan!
 - ❖ North Park Main St.
 - ❖ North Park Main St.
 - ❖ Mailer (7 responses)
 - ❖ Thank You!
 - ❖ A member of Main Street. Did lots of discussion at our meeting
 - ❖ Website & flyer in the mail
 - ❖ Angry inflammatory fliers opposing the plan
 - ❖ Flyer – misspelled buses (look up definition of buss)
 - ❖ Only recently learned of this
 - ❖ Saw flyer posted
 - ❖ Recently purchased property in area.
 - ❖ Last one.
 - ❖ Flyer , poster
 - ❖ Neighbor



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- ❖ I walked into the office on University Ave.
- ❖ Café Calabria, mail
- ❖ Mail & store on University
- ❖ I'm heavily involved in community happenings
- ❖ Part of steering committee
- ❖ Community groups
- ❖ Helped select consultants. While to comp. Models are interesting they do not really address the streets adjacent to University & future ADA/scooter use – i.e. no new motorcycle parking! No major bike parking areas
- ❖ PAC
- ❖ North Park News (2 responses)
- ❖ Internet e-mail
- ❖ NPMS – NPCA – Friends – posters

12. Any other comments?

- ❖ Yes. Please keep me informed.
- ❖ If development occurs on University Ave, how would all that activity be handled within this traffic concept?
- ❖ We would love to have the historic streetcars running through North Park
- ❖ When is the expected time to start
- ❖ Wish I had been aware – thank you for mail notification
- ❖ I'm in favor of any improvements as long as funds are not diverted from repairing aging roads, sidewalks + curbs in surrounding areas
- ❖ How do I help?
- ❖ Very disappointed in you as consultants. I will contact Ms. Atkins also, “traffic calming” on Lincoln Ave. + no parkway. Yet when I asked about this, I was given no info & big brush off. If it's outside the project area, why highlight it on the flyer?
- ❖ How will the traffic affect safety for the families & children on the side streets where traffic will be diverted? Is it possible to create two main streets, one traveling eastbound, one traveling west bound as done in Palm Springs, CA
- ❖ Many people own more than 2 cars but live in dwellings w/o enough parking. Could resident parking decals be issued with a limit per dwelling & type like S.F. house vs (apartment unit that generally does not have street frontage for parking). I know, sounds discriminatory
- ❖ Please keep the trolley line as a consideration!
- ❖ Illinois is wide enough to land a B-52 – speeding & streetcar racing. People store their cars on the street for months.
- ❖ Did I mention I'd like to see the trolley included?
- ❖ Businesses who may be adversely affected have sufficient time to adjust businesses are easily relocated & there are plenty of available retail spaces with rear/side loading opportunities
- ❖ Thanks for all the creative works.



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- ❖ It's important to make University Ave safer for pedestrians, even if this means a handful of businesses lose a loading area.
- ❖ Good job!
- ❖ This was an excellent presentation.
- ❖ E-mail
- ❖ Support as long as parking during slow times remains in plan
- ❖ Bring the trolleys back!
- ❖ RBF needs to take a very close look at the block on the south side on University between 30th and Ray. This block is a diagonal block in terms of its configuration. It helps transition University from wide to narrow at this point. What are you proposing to do on this block? Please analyze it carefully.
- ❖ Coordinate improvements w/ theatre plaza project.
- ❖ Trolley = folly
- ❖ Visual simulation would have been better with the street names included.
- ❖ In any plan, all stakeholders should be included. For the last 2 years, I wondered from the start about business. Now in the final stages, we know where they'll stand. Business should have had their input actively pursued from start.
- ❖ Talk to businesses on corners to reduce driveway cuts along University & increase or add driveway cuts on side streets to improve pedestrian safety. Synchronize traffic signals for pedestrians. Coordinate 29th St. improvements with that task force.
- ❖ If the proposed mobility plan is adopted, then parking on side streets should be mitigated by ensuring that all parking spaces are clearly marked on all side streets including North Park Way and Lincoln Ave.

Comment Board

- ❖ Alabama St going one way So. to No.
- ❖ Bus stops to stay the same. Seniors will not cross two street
- ❖ Transit only park to 30th east bound too
- ❖ Restricted parking bad idea in transit lane
- ❖ Diagonal parking is a blighting influence (see City Heights).
- ❖ Provide residents nearby w/free stickers n/500' of 30/Univ (permit parking only ...).
- ❖ Enforce no transient camper parking in N.P.
- ❖ Limit parking during rush hour.
- ❖ Create diagonal parking on Arnold on one side.
- ❖ Permit parking on Alabama St.
- ❖ Parking north of University on Arizona Primarily serves residents, (where diagonals are indicated) not Univ. businesses.
- ❖ Diagonal parking (AZ N of Univ) should be continued N. to Lincoln.
- ❖ SANDAG does not deserve priority over N.P. residents & they should clean their bus stop daily & provide cement pads to save our streets from asphalt mounding.



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- ❖ Permit parking stickers (free) for residents to keep business out of neighborhoods
- ❖ Pedestrian: subways beneath Univ. bridges over Univ.
- ❖ We have a problem with off-street parking when we eliminate left turn on side street.
- ❖ Diagonal crosswalks on 30th & other heavy pedestrian crossings
- ❖ We think all proposed elements are right on target. We moved here from Cambridge, Mass where we saw central square vastly improved by similar changes. Keep up the good work.
- ❖ Please! Let's get the side street parking expanded A.S.A.P. – residents of Villa Sao Miguel on Alabama St. (3776-3778) do not have any place to park!!!!
- ❖ What happened to no parkway – I think that they should be included in the project. There are businesses in no parkway.
- ❖ I agree about having diagonal parking put in ASAP on those streets where there is no possibility of widening. Do alter inexpensive things RIGHT AWAY. Always possible to change after studying effects. Having diagonal parking NOW will make the businesses more amenable to other changes. Also: close any streets, put up “no right turn” “no left turn” signs NOW.
- ❖ Butt trays at bus stops for cigarette smokers to keep butts off sidewalk & into drainage system
- ❖ Concern about the blighted properties on Florida St. directly behind 3776 Alabama St. What can be done?
- ❖ Isn't traffic flow all right on Univ. now?
- ❖ Keep North Park a small residential community like La Mesa.
- ❖ Many people avoid University Ave now because it is so dangerous & difficult to navigate.

Letter

“I do not understand, however, why curb extensions and high-contrast sidewalk crossing markings are being planned for Alabama Street (north) – a relatively lower population density area – whereas no such are designated for Alabama Street (south) – a relatively higher population density area – where most of the hundreds of seniors mentioned above live and walk to grocery shopping. I am convinced that this is a serious oversight which must be rectified.

Neither do I understand the rationale for moving the east/west bus stops such that they would thereby force the senior community to cross Alabama Street (north) headed west and Alabama Street (south) headed east. How can this possibly be safer for the seniors than having the stops on or near the eastern corner of Alabama Street (north) and on or near the western corner of Alabama Street (south) nearby the ends of the new University Avenue crosswalk? This oversight also must be rectified.



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As regards parking, there is none available on Alabama Street (south) to substitute for the spaces that are being eliminated along University Avenue (east). The parking on Alabama Street (south) is already oversubscribed to the point where resident-only parking sections should be designated. Neither does there seem to be any plan, it appears, to create diagonal parking spaces along Alabama Street (south). Indeed, it is not clear if that is even possible given the street's width."

2.4 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FROM COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Although hundreds of varied comments, concerns and ideas were identified during the six-month process, several items raised regarding the University Avenue Mobility Plan were repeated numerous times. The following are key issues that emerged, along with a brief discussion on how they were or were not addressed in the Plan.

Parking and Deliveries on University Avenue

The potential loss of on-street parallel parking spaces along University Avenue was one of the most controversial issues discussed. While many people were in favor of removing parallel parking in order to provide a transit-only lane, a number of property and business owners were equally adamant about the need to retain these spaces for both parking and loading/unloading.

Parking will continue to be a key issue on this project. There are significant operational benefits to both transit and passenger vehicles, as well as safety and emergency vehicle access benefits associated with the removal of the on-street parallel parking. Selection of the Refined Concept Plan included an analysis of five parking scenarios. To meet the needs of both the business community and the peak hour operations of the corridor, a parking alternative was proposed that restricted the on-street parking in the peak hours (7:00-9:00 a.m. and 4:00-6:00 p.m.). During these peak hours, the curbside lane would be for transit vehicles only. SANDAG and the project Steering Committee both oppose the restricted on-street parking concept. To maximize transit operations along the corridor, SANDAG and the Steering Committee preferred the removal of all on-street parallel parking.

It should be noted that no on-street diagonal parking will be removed or modified as part of the Refined Concept Plan. The issues associated with parking pertain only to the parallel parking spaces on the corridor.

Increased Diagonal Parking on Side Streets

Generally, the idea of increasing diagonal parking on side streets was viewed positively by the community. However, residents expressed concern about the potential increase in traffic, as well as increased difficulty in finding resident parking.



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Residents along the side streets will benefit from the additional parking. It is likely that if parallel parking remained on University Avenue, it would go underutilized. Traffic volumes along the corridor in a single lane of traffic bound by a raised median and a parking lane would make drivers uncomfortable with backing into a parallel parking space. Therefore, people would seek parking on the side streets to avoid this discomfort. By improving side streets to include more parking from University Avenue to El Cajon Boulevard north of University and to one block south of University Avenue (Wightman Way or North Park Way), residents will also benefit from the additional parking. This additional parking may generate a slight increase in traffic on the side streets.

However, the increase in traffic due to parking is anticipated to be counterbalanced by the anticipated decrease in traffic volume associated with restricting left turn access at all unsignalized intersections. A shift in local traffic is anticipated to occur to those streets where full access is provided (signalized intersections along University Avenue).

Diversion of University Avenue Traffic

The effects of diverted traffic onto side streets was a common concern by many residents and adjacent business owners in the North Park area.

Traffic will be diverted to the side streets and to the surrounding roadway network due to the constrained capacity along University Avenue. Existing traffic volumes in the peak hour exceed the single lane capacity. Therefore, it is anticipated that as this project is constructed, traffic will divert to other routes. The design elements of the Refined Concept Plan, discussed in Chapter 8 of this report, address some potential traffic calming elements for the roads forecast to see an increase in traffic volume. The implementation of diagonal parking on both sides of the street, as discussed in the previous section, is also a natural traffic calming measure.

Relocation and Elimination of Bus Stops

The relocation and elimination of certain bus stops along the corridor was negatively viewed by numerous community members. Most concerns were related to the convenience and safety of elderly and handicapped residents.

Transit stop relocation will provide equally spaced transit stops along the corridor. These stops are located within approximately 2.5 blocks (1,300 feet) of one another and will provide improved amenities such as bus shelters, seating, signage, and level boarding. Along University Avenue, where the slope of the road is steep (Park Boulevard to Arnold Avenue), passengers can walk downhill to reach a transit stop.



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Utah Roundabout

Community members expressed interest in exploring an additional roundabout at the University and Utah intersection.

An analysis of the right-of-way impacts of the one-lane roundabout at Utah Street determined that the roundabout could not be implemented without significant right-of-way taking. The roundabout would extend outside the right-of-way on each corner of the intersection requiring the removal of several buildings. Therefore, the Utah Street Roundabout was rejected as a potential modification to the Preferred Concept Plan.

Pedestrian Scramble Light

A pedestrian scramble phase allows pedestrians to move freely within an intersection during a “pedestrian only phase”. During this phase, all traffic would be required to stop. Currently, there are all-pedestrian phases at University Avenue/Texas Street and University Avenue/Utah Street. Both these intersections require split phasing north and south because the intersections are offset by several feet.

There was community support for the pedestrian scramble phase at 30th Street. Pedestrian scramble phases at standard intersections, such as 30th Street, result in higher delays for pedestrians. The greatest benefit is to people who need to cross two legs of the intersection, while the scramble phase is typically a disbenefit to people crossing only one leg. Pedestrians would be required to wait for up to 90 seconds to receive a pedestrian indication with the scramble phase. Pedestrians would be required to wait as all traffic signal phases cycle through before giving a pedestrian green light. With standard phasing, the pedestrian would be allowed to cross with the concurrent vehicle traffic signal phase and would typically be required to wait approximately 30 to 40 seconds to cross each leg of the intersection. Implementing the scramble phase would result in higher pedestrian delay times at 30th Street and would result in higher delays to passenger vehicles. Therefore, the pedestrian scramble phase is not recommended at 30th Street.

Dedicated Bicycle Lanes

The lack of dedicated bicycle lanes along University was a concern of many workshop participants.

Although the transit only lanes are not dedicated bicycle lanes, bicycles will be permitted to travel in the transit only lane. This is an improvement over the existing conditions, where bicycles are required to share the travel way with both buses and passenger vehicles. With bus headways of six to ten minutes, bicyclists will have several windows of opportunity to travel the corridor without an interaction with a bus.



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Historic Street Car

The community expressed definite interest in the historic streetcar. The feasibility study showed that the historic streetcar is not infeasible, but would be costly to implement (\$25 million) and there are some constraints in the Refined Concept Plan that would need to be addressed prior to implementation. For example, all parallel on-street parking would need to be removed from University Avenue to allow for the historic streetcar. To avoid unnecessary merging with mixed flow traffic, the streetcar should operate in its own 12-foot lane. The Refined Concept Plan allocates 11 feet to the transit only lane. Therefore, the transit only lane would need to be widened by one foot, either from the curb or from the raised median, to accommodate the historic streetcar. Other critical issues associated with the implementation of the historic streetcar are outlined in Chapter 10 of this report.